

# **CITIZEN'S TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Arizona Department of Transportation  
206 S. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rm. 311, MD 310-B  
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**November 18, 2003**

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Board Room 145-147, 206 South 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona on November 18, 2003 with Chairperson Roc Arnett presiding.

### **Members Present:**

Roc Arnett, Chairperson  
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2  
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

### **Members Absent:**

Dwight Amery, Member-at-Large  
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3  
Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1

### **Others Present:**

Victor Mendez, Director ADOT  
Elizabeth Neville, Regional Freeway  
Bill Hayden, Regional Freeway  
Kwisung Kang, Regional Freeway  
Ed Johnson, Citizen  
Amy Edwards, HDR, Inc.  
P.S. Lowe, Citizen  
Beyanh Nemela, Citizen  
Kevin Biesty, Legislative Services

Dan Lance, State Eng. Office  
D. D. Baker, Citizen  
William "Blue" Crowley, Citizen  
Doris Schwartz, Citizen  
Bob McKnight, Citizen  
Andrea Love, HDR, Inc.  
Daina Mann, RPTA  
Joe Ryan, Citizen

### **1. Call To Order:**

Chairperson Arnett called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He noted a quorum was not present, stating, therefore, the committee would not be conducting any business.

### **2. Approval of Minutes, September 16, 2003:**

Chairperson Arnett asked staff to arrange to have the minutes and the 2004 meeting schedule approved via email.

### 3. Staff Report:

**Bill Hayden, ADOT**, reported the following information:

- Santan Freeway from I-10 to Price Freeway (west ½) was opened to traffic on November 17, 2003. A freeway public celebration and ribbon cutting was held Saturday, November 15, 2003 on the freeway. The next 2.9 mile section is under construction and is expected to open one year from December.
- MAG ran an air quality analysis on the Proposed ½ Cent Sales Tax Extension Plan and air quality met the standards. The Plan will go for approval on November 25<sup>th</sup> at the Regional Council meeting. 57 percent of the Plan is allocated to Freeways and Highways, 32 percent is set aside for Transit, nine percent goes toward street improvements and two percent is for Other Programs.
- ADOT is working on scheduling and details of programming of the Phase I and II priority projects in conjunction with MAG.
- The Red Mountain Freeway (202L), US 60/202L TI, Phase I construction project was awarded to FNF Construction, Inc.
- The State Route 51, Bell-Pima habitat mitigation project was awarded to Recon, Inc.
- SR 51: I-10 to Shea Boulevard (Design Build) – Drainage work, PCCP pavement work, roadway excavation, miscellaneous concrete work and bridge construction continues. Ames Construction and Edward Kraemer & Sons are scheduled to complete construction in spring of 2004.
- Santan Freeway (Loop 202) I-10/Wild Horse Pass T.I. – Earthwork, PCCP pavement and bridge construction are underway. Pulice Construction expects to complete construction in spring of 2004.
- Price (101L)/Santan (202L) TI, East ½ - Retaining walls, ramp construction, bridge construction and other miscellaneous work underway.
- Santan Freeway (202L) Dobson Road – Arizona Avenue – Sound walls and other miscellaneous construction work underway.
- US60/202L, Phase I – Contractor started removing median barrier in preparation of detour work. Setting up pre-wet pipe system. Eastbound Ellsworth closed until first of year.
- Grand Avenue (US60) – 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue & 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue – Traffic restrictions continue as crews build new bridge that will carry Grand Avenue over the Camelback Road & 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue TI and a new bridge to carry 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue over the Grand & Bethany Home Road TI. Edward Kraemer & Sons is scheduled to complete the \$20.2M project in mid to late-2004.
- Grand Avenue (US60) – 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue & 75<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Earthwork, underground work, drainage, bridge construction and miscellaneous concrete work continues.
- Quiet Pavement, Phase I – All paving completed. Neighborhood reaction has been very positive.

The following questions and comments were made:



- Mr. Schwartz asked how many miles will be laid with rubberized asphalt as a total program. Mr. Hayden said 115 miles will be paved valley wide, however, most of the Loop 101 on the west side won't be done until Phase II or III.

#### **4. Update on State Route 74:**

**Dan Lance, ADOT**, explained the study was started in 1999 when ADOT and MCDOT identified SR 74 as a key component of the urban and statewide system. He stated MCDOT and Peoria helped finance the study and a Plan Development Process was initiated. He reviewed the basic principals of the study, which included coordinating with local land use planning, limiting the total number of access points and conflicts, separating conflict points and turning movements from through movements, maintaining a hierarchy of access and providing sufficient spacing between intersections. The purpose of the study was to recommend implementation of sound access management principles, control access to adjacent land use, minimize the number of access points, minimize vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle conflicts, allow for safe lane changes and speed transitions, provide for a smooth transition of traffic from one roadway to another, and provide for uniform speed on the primary facility. He identified major stakeholders and partners in the study effort. He mentioned some of the major project challenges, including multi-jurisdictional coordination and consensus building. He reviewed long-range traffic projections for 2015, pointing out development will occur along I-17 and to the west.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Chairperson Arnett asked if any cost estimates have been developed. Mr. Lance responded yes, stating it will cost hundreds of millions of dollars to build the four lane divided roadway and interchanges. He noted they did not receive any major earmarking of funding in the draft Regional Transportation Plan for major construction improvements to the corridor. SR 74 was added, however, to the right-of-way preservation list.
- In response to Mr. Schwartz's question, Mr. Lance explained the study recommends they enter an agreement with the local jurisdictions of Phoenix and Peoria to secure right-of-way along the corridor and associated with future interchanges.
- Joe Ryan, citizen, suggested ADOT build wider ramps with larger turning radiuses so that they can eventually accommodate three lanes as well as a breakdown lane.
- William "Blue" Crowley, citizen, asked what is being done to ensure roadways in the area of the proving grounds are maintained. He also asked what is being done to include communities and how will it interplay with the bike pass.

#### **5. Light Rail Transit Plan:**

**Daina Mann, R.P.T.A.**, explained Valley Metro Rail, Inc.'s is a non-profit public corporation whose purpose is to plan, design, construct and operate the light rail system, including future extensions. She emphasized that Valley Metro is not a planning organization, stating they implement what is in the regional plan. She identified light rail funding sources, stating they are



looking at a 50/50 federal/local match. She said a 4/10-cent sales tax in Phoenix; ½ cent sales taxes in Tempe and Glendale and a quality of life tax in Mesa provided the necessary matching funds. She displayed a map depicting the 20-mile starter line, starting at 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Bethany Home Road and ending at Main Street in Mesa. She displayed maps depicting all of the local express and bus rapid transit routes and how those routes would interact with light rail transit. She highlighted the light rail route and station locations, pointing out they are concentrated heavily along Central Avenue. She identified the proposed locations for park and ride lots, stating they expect half of the rider-ship to drive to the stations every day. She explained the stations will be approximately 300 feet long by 16 feet wide and a great deal of time was spent working on a station design that will keep people relatively cool. She noted approximately one percent of funding is being reserved for the Art Program. Ms. Mann described the concept light rail vehicle, stating each vehicle will be approximately 93 feet long and hold 150 passengers. She said the vehicles can be linked into three-car trains and will have a top speed of 55 miles per hour. She stated light rail would operate in its own lane at street level and use a signal priority system. She said the system will operate from 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. and will run about 10 minute frequencies during peak periods and 15 to 20 minute frequencies during off-peak periods. She said the average speed, including stops, will be about 20 miles per hour. She said they expect rider-ship to reach 26,000 boarding's in the opening year and 50,000 boarding's in 2020. She stated the project is in the final design phase, noting they received a Record of Decision on their environmental process in January. She stated they received a "highly recommended" rating from the Highway Transit Administration. She reported right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation has begun and they are finalizing their design plans. Ms. Mann reviewed their phased opening schedule, stating Phase I is expected to be completed by December 2006 and Phase II should be completed by April 2007.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Schwartz expressed his opinion the system, as described, will be inefficient because of the number of stops and 90 degree curves. Ms. Mann stated they went through an alternative analysis and major investment study. She said, while the cities and MAG are looking at commuter rail system that would operate on existing railroad right-of-way, the valley does not have a lot of abandoned railroad right-of-way and it is very difficult to negotiate for the railroad right-of-way that is available. Mr. Schwartz said he believes a bus system might be more effective. Ms. Mann noted they compiled a report that evaluated the proposed system against a bus only system.
- Chairperson Arnett asked who is doing the planning. Ms. Mann explained MAG ensures the rail system is included in the regional plan; however, RPTA does all of the physical planning of the system. Chairperson Arnett referenced articles in the newspaper criticizing rail, pointing out he has not seen any rebuttal articles. Ms. Mann offered to provide data to refute inaccurate information contained in the articles. Chairperson Arnett emphasized the importance of publicly refuting the inaccurate statistics. Chairperson Arnett asked if any ½ cent sales tax funds will be used in the first 20-mile starter system. Ms. Mann responded no, stating those funds will be for future extensions. She confirmed funding is available locally to complete the project without using the ½ cent sales tax funds.



- Joe Ryan disputed statistics quoted in the Air Quality Technical report. Chairperson Arnett asked Mr. Ryan to email his information to staff.
- Blue Crowley asked Ms. Mann to show how the vehicles link together and how persons with disabilities will be able to access the vehicles without assistance. He asked if the system will utilize solar power.

## 6. South Mountain Freeway EIS:

**Amy Edwards, HDR Engineering, Inc.**, explained the South Mountain Freeway will connect I-10 on the west side to I-10 on the south side and is the last segment of the Regional Freeway System approved in the 1980's. She discussed population changes that have taken place since the 1950's and projected to occur by 2025. She stated the South Mountain Freeway study looked at demand in the area as well as how much of the demand could be handled by existing facilities and by potential improvements. She said the study found 22 percent excess demand in the future. She stated they looked at environmental constraints in the area and engineering and design criteria when identifying reasonable alternatives. She said nine alternatives were initially identified, which were then narrowed to three alternatives and two options. She stated the Pecos Road Alternative will have impacts to South Mountain Park and South Mountain Ridges and, in an effort to avoid those impacts; they have had ongoing discussions with the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC). She said the GRIC has agreed to allow them to proceed with a study on three alternatives, one from the Borderlands Master Plan and two from past toll road studies. She explained they will continue to meet with the Gila River Indian Communities as well as the Citizens Advisory Team, various municipalities and stakeholders, and conduct a detailed analysis of the alternatives on the west side. She noted they are also completing a project video for distribution to the Indian community. She explained the environmental analysis will look at numerous factors, including air quality, cultural sites, and environmental justice. She reviewed the study schedule, stating it is developed based on not having Gila River Indian Community alternatives. She said they anticipate completion in 2005, with a draft Environmental Impact Statement going out for public review at the end of 2004.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Schwartz asked if any of the three remaining alternatives have been recommended. Ms. Edwards said the alternatives are currently undergoing the technical review process. She stated their intent is to have a preferred alternative when they go out for public review of the Environmental Impact Statement.

## 7. Call to the Public:

**Bob McKnight, citizen**, demonstrated how seating and other design elements of the proposed light rail station platforms will impede people in wheelchairs. He stated the platforms will be accommodating bicycle, pedestrian and scooter traffic, expressing his opinion the use of electric scooters will increase. He said the platforms will be too small to handle the traffic.

**Joe Ryan, citizen**, expressed concern about people disembarking the trains and walking on the tracks. He asked why they decided against having Sherlock slide-outs and tie downs for wheelchair-bound passengers.

**D. D. Barker, citizen**, suggested they add "Response Requested" to the comment cards. She referenced a letter she sent to the Committee to which Chairperson Arnett suggested she take her concerns to the State Legislature. She said a number of her comments were directed to Dennis Smith, who responded by letter and thanked her for her involvement. She said he indicated they will have a forum to accept public input, however, they are still making presentations in what she feels are executive sessions because the public is not involved. She pointed out Terry Goddard declared MAG is not government and cannot receive state retirement, asking, how they can trust directing regional area road money to MAG. With regard to light rail, she said there are 425 potentially contaminated sites and the City of Phoenix has requested \$400,000 from the Federal Government to study four of the sites. She questioned who will pay for cleanup once the studies are completed, stating it will impact the cost of rail.

**William "Blue" Crowley, citizen**, asked to receive the briefing packets provided to Committee members. He also asked for a copy of the letter wherein it was stated Chairperson Arnett's meals with MAG are not considered compensation or reimbursement. He said the State needs to look at the northwest and west part of the county, pointing out 60 percent of the county exists west of the Loop 303.

**8. Next Scheduled Meeting:**

Tuesday, January 20, 2004  
Arizona Department of Transportation  
206 South 17th Avenue, #145-147  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

**9. CTOC Member Reports:**

No comments were made.

**10. Closing comments and Adjournment:**

Mr. Hayden pointed out the five-mile section of the Santan Freeway that opened represents the 100<sup>th</sup> mile of the regional freeway system.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.